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SOURCE Kung Fang Chan-tou Shou-ts'e (Chinese Communist Bandit Combat Manual),
Chapters 1 and 5,

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COMMUNIST COMBAT TACTICS

I. COMMAND PRINCIPLES

Lin Piao

The importance of decisions which must be made by commanders in combat cannot be overemphasized. Although sound advice offered by capable personnel must be weighed carefully, commanders must not depend on nor be influenced by others in making decisions, for they alone are responsible. In making decisions, commanders must remember that they must be derived from a careful study of the actual situation, for upon the accuracy of their estimates depends the success or failure of any battle.

When an opportunity presents itself to inflict a severe blow upon the enemy, no time must be lost in launching an attack. Hesitancy through fear of losses not only may mean missing an excellent opportunity but may lead to deterioration of troop morale, which would be a greater blow than losses sustained in combat. Due care must be taken by commanders to insure that the order to launch an attack covers all important matters and that their subordinates are thoroughly acquainted with their responsibilities and functions in the attack.

Even if an order to launch an attack has been issued by higher authorities, commanders may suspend the attack if an estimate of the situation shows conclusively the inadvisability of executing such an order. Moreover, if they find themselves fighting a losing battle after engaging the enemy, they may withdraw their troops from the battlefield. Such action is a true manifestation of qualification for leadership.

In combat, the practice of deploying troops or attacking more than one objective simultaneously must be avoided. The plan of attack must generally follow the principle of employing five to six units to attack one enemy unit. Before launching an attack, a thorough reconnaissance of the terrain must be

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made so that the most suitable point of attack may be selected. When pressed for time, the commander himself must go forward to carry out the reconnaissance and must not depend on his subordinates to perform the task.

The determinant for launching a two-front, three-front, or four-front attack shall be the number of troops available. The ratio of troop strength of the attacking force to that of the supporting force must be about three (or four) to one. It must be remembered that regardless of the tactics employed, the main offensive must be directed against the enemy's weakest point. Selection of the point of attack must be based on the terrain where our fire power can be utilized most effectively.

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II. ONE POINT TWO-FRONT TACTICS

This is generally used in attacking the enemy when his troops are numerically superior to our own. As the phrase indicates, these tactics call for employment of two attacking forces to launch a surprise attack on one enemy position or unit. One force is generally used as a diversionary unit to feign an attack from one direction, while the main attack is launched by the main force in the direction of the enemy's weakest point. The assault formation of the main attacking force is in the form of a wedge to cut the enemy force in two. The attack must be carried out rapidly to prevent the enemy from reorganizing and forming a defense. It might be mentioned that although these tactics have proved very successful in inflicting a severe blow upon the enemy, they have also proved very costly.

In employing these tactics, extra caution must be taken to avoid overreaching. If an attack is to be launched against an enemy battalion, the attack must be directed solely against this battalion and not extended to other enemy units. It is well to take advantage of the enemy's confusion to extend the area of attack, but commanders must remember that widening the front in such an assault will make control of troops more difficult and may lead to grave consequences.

If the enemy is on the move, the attack must be made against the enemy flank; if the enemy is a stationary force, such as garrison troops, the attack must be made against his weakest point. Past experience have proved the folly of engaging the enemy on his front, for this is usually his strongest point.

When concentrating troops to attack an enemy position or unit, care must be taken to insure that sufficient troops are assembled to fulfill the mission. Numerical superiority over the enemy in any attack should be about three to one. As an example, if an assault is to be launched against a company of enemy troops, a battalion must be employed. Even if an estimate of the situation shows that the fire power, military strategy and command ability of our forces are superior to an enemy of equal strength, the practice of employing an equal number of troops to engage the enemy must be avoided, for it would be extremely difficult to gain victory even with such advantages. Overwhelming superiority in numbers is the only sure guarantee of victory.

The following principles must be closely adhered to in launching a sudden attack upon the enemy:

1. The front to be attacked must not be too wide, so that fire power may be used effectively to cover the area.

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2. Attacking troops must be deployed in depth, never in width, to provide power to penetrate enemy defenses. This formation will also guarantee adequate defense of the rear area.

3. The main assault unit should outnumber the diversionary unit by three to one. Under certain situations, however, this ratio may be increased as much as eight (or nine) to one.

4. To envelop enemy forces, care must be taken to insure that the envelopment is thorough and that no point of escape is left to the enemy.

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